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HOW A YOUNG NEWBERRY SOLDIER WAS SAVED FROM BEING BURIED ALIVE

By R. H. Grencker in Newberry Observer.

That wounded soldiers were buried alive on the battle fields of France, where it is said the poppies grow crimson-hued from soil enriched by the blood of heroes, is verified by a young Newberryman who narrowly escaped such an awful fate. If it makes one shudder to think of the terrible slaughter when men fell as fast as the watch clicked, according to a writer recently describing the scenes where men were "plunging forward in the teeth of a terrific and terrifying electric tornado," as it seemed, what must be one's thoughts when one reflects that some of the men who fell and were taken for dead were actually buried while still living.

This is supposed to be, and doubtless is, true from the standpoint of the young soldier in question and the incidents related by him. He lay on the battlefield when "the streaks and shafts of fire and the flying shrapnel as a veritable spray of molten lava thrown from the bowels of a maddened volcano punctured the blackness with a rain of red as merciless as the fires of hell." There where the unwounded men kept going on "with a courage that was supreme and a spirit that strengthened even the wounded and dying men on to final efforts of sublime heroism that challenges today the history of the world to show its equal!"

In writing up this returned Newberryman I am also holding up to public view for loving inspection others of our boys, some of whom were also wounded and who suffered on those fields the hardships of cruel war; all to whom I have been wanting to pay tribute, including those who wanted to take part in the great conflict but who were denied the privilege.

The subject of this sketch is Robert I. Gilliam, son of Mrs. Mittie C. Gilliam, of Oakland avenue. Robert was a pupil of the Speers Street school, taught by Miss Bess Burton, and was a classmate of Richard Jullen, who is now in the navy. Young Gilliam, being under age, but determined to enlist in the army, gained the consent of his mother for his enlistment and enlisted when but only a little over 15 years old. He was a member of Company E, 16th infantry, 1st brigade of the 1st division and was soon promoted to first-class private. He was one among the first to go with the American expeditionary forces, and, with his comrades of the First division to win from Brigadier General Parker these high words of praise: "There is, to my thinking, nothing finer in this world than the self-effacing role of the true private soldier of infantry, and nowhere in this war has this private soldier of infantry been truer to his country's expectations of him than in the Sixteenth infantry." The men, he said, "who, with their sweat and blood, have taken the ground that meant victory," and "who have impressed upon Europe, in the supreme test of battle, the quality of American manhood."

The story of the 16th infantry "is an epitome of America's achievement in the world's war," with, as has been said, "each one in his appointed place, each one to his own work, and each man's duty of equal importance in the face of death."

The 16th infantry was originally composed of regulars, but was re-organized for overseas service. The regiment has the credit of having gained all the objectives assigned to it in each of the great battles that followed—Cantigny, Soissons, St. Mihiel, the Argonne and Sedan. It was at Soissons where young Gilliam fell, wounded high unto death, the 18th day of July, 1918, having been hit in the head by a bursting shell.

The historian has it that the wheat field through which they were passing was soon found to be infested with machine gun nests. The doughboys passed these with a single order of "surrender or death." The colonel had forbidden the sending in of the report, "Held up by machine guns," and the 16th had no intention of being held up by anything. It was with great difficulty and heavy losses that the objective—the Paris-Soissons road—was made. That road, the historian

goes on to relate, lined with tall trees, was a veritable dead line. Every tree sheltered a machine gun, and from nearby knolls the road was literally swept by light Maxims. The enemy artillery from two directions was focussed upon that region and the avions were circling overhead. Never up to that moment had the 16th encountered such desperate resistance. Two companies were almost wiped out in a short time. Soon all the officers were gone, and a sergeant took command of the surviving elements of the battalion.

Private Gilliam lay where he had fallen, and for seventeen hours was unconscious. When he came to he could neither move nor see; all he could do was to hear, and what he heard for four days and nights was enough to turn to gray the blackest hairs of a human's head. Blind from the fearful wound in his head, and drinking his own dripping blood to quench his terrible thirst, part of that awful time of his paralysis he could hear the groans of the wounded and the dying, but was powerless to make himself noticed.

Finally a little Jew doctor came to him as he lay with his death tag on, for he had already been tagged for burial, and, sticking a needle in his arm, said to one of the Red Cross nurses, "This kid is not dead. What do you want to bury him for?" They carried him to Paris, where he lay for two months without being able to move hand or foot or to see. He was then shipped to the Ellis Island hospital, New York, the 25th of October.

His mother went there to see him on the day the armistice was signed, November 11. She found him still as helpless as a baby. He had regained the use of one eye.

Later he was removed to the Cape May, New Jersey, hospital and was afterwards allowed to come home, having recovered sufficiently enough to be able to walk with the aid of a stick and the help of others.

Pieces of the shattered shell are still working through his flesh. With sight restored, and able to walk about, he is now enjoying the tender ministrations of his devoted mother at home. She it was who told me of the above incidents when I went to the home to get the facts for this sketch, as he did not like to speak of the horrible sights and experiences which even now unnerve him in their recital.

Among other horrifying incidents related is one similar to his case. Among the dead bodies that had been placed in the trenches for burial, a nurse saw a finger move and called attention to the fact. Removing the young soldier from the sickening pile, he was given attention—and is now at his home, well and happy, to the joy of his people. There must have been other unconscious and near-dead soldiers among those piles hurriedly prepared for hasty burials who were not so fortunate as the two mentioned to be snatched from the very jaws of death.

It is staggering to think of. Imagine a young soldier lying among the dead ready for burial, conscious of what is going on by hearing, but unable to see or move, waiting for his turn to be thrown in, knowing that his still living body had been tagged to be soon covered in the ground.

But Robert Gilliam is safe at home, having the satisfaction of knowing that the 16th, to which he belonged, has the proud record of having been in the "invincible first," and was "the first to arrive in France, first to fire a shot, first to shed its blood."

As it was "a little Jew doctor" who discovered signs of life in the body of young Gilliam, I am reminded that Dr. Isidore Schayer, formerly of Laurens, is "a little Jew doctor," who was with the American expeditionary forces. He may not have been the doctor in question, but it would be just like him to discover such cases. When I knew him in his home town he held the reputation of being one of the finest doctors in his profession and a diagnostician without a superior and perhaps no equal. Whoever it may have been that saved his life so miraculously, Robert Gilliam has cause for everlasting gratitude to

CLASH AVERTED IN MINE FIELDS

Belligerents Returning to Their Homes on Special Trains, Governor Cornwall of West Virginia on Verge of Asking for Troop Movement.

Charlestown, W. Va., Sept. 7.—The several thousand miners who took up a march across country yesterday with the avowed purpose of forcing non-union miners in Logan County to organize were prevailed upon today to desist in their efforts after almost hourly telephonic conferences throughout the greater part of the day between Governor Cornwell in this city and Frank Keeny, president of District 17, United Mine Workers, the men were started back to their homes late this afternoon from Danville and Clothier at which points they had camped overnight. They were brought back in special trains sent to the rendezvous by the governor and the union officials said that all will return to work tomorrow morning. The men had taken up the march without instructions or counsel with President Keeny. Rumors and reports that are said to be false and misleading induced the miners and with one section of the little army it was the determination to remedy the reported condition in Logan County. Some of the reports that reached the miners in the Kanawha field were that women and children were being murdered by mine guards in Logan County and it was their determination to put a stop to it. Saturday morning President Keeny was called upon by the governor to go to the men who were at Danville, Boone County, and urge them to disperse and return to their homes. President Keeny notified the governor that the men had voted to return and upon that notification three special trains were sent to bring the men back. It was expected that the men would come back at once as the trains were on the scene at 1:30. It was 3:55 before the first train started away. In the meantime on the governor's desk was a telegram to General Wood at Chicago, who has had two regiments of troops under waiting orders at Camp Sherman for 24 hours. These troops were held under orders to move at a moment's notice and just when the governor was about to give up hope of a peaceful dispersing of the men President Keeny telephoned that the men were boarding the trains and would move out at once.

Three hundred men, who are at Clothier, nearby refused to board the trains and said they would return as they came.

NEGROES LYNCHED
BY JACKSONVILLE MOB

Unknown Men Break Into Jail to Secure Victims Charged with Murder. Jacksonville, Fla., Sept. 8.—Unknown men broke into the county jail at an early hour this morning, took therefrom two negroes held for the murder recently of George Dufosse, carried them in automobiles out into the outskirts of the city, riddled them with bullets, put ropes around their necks and dragged them through the city streets dropping one of the bodies in front of one of the leading hotels. Sheriff's deputies and police are now out hunting for the other body. The sheriff heard early in the night that there might be an attempt to lynch a negro held in jail on the charge of assaulting a little white girl so, on advice of Judge Simmons he put this negro in an automobile and sent him to St. Augustine for safe keeping. Arriving at the jail and not finding this negro, the mob took the other two and put them to death.

It is estimated that there were only about 50 men in the crowd that gained entrance to the county jail. Answering a knocking at the front door of the jail shortly after 1 a. m., Jailer Tucker, as he opened the door which was the entrance to his residence, was covered with guns and ordered to make no move or outcry. The jailer was quickly handcuffed, relieved of his keys and ordered to point out the tier of cells in which the wanted negroes were confined. The men evidently knew the negroes and after seizing them left the jail.

"the little Jew doctor", and to the overruling Providence that guided the hand, and the people of Newberry have something to wonder at in the fact that walking in their midst is one who had so remarkable an experience as that above related.

MAY COMPROMISE IN TREATY FIGHT

Senator Simmons, North Carolina, Says Some Concessions will have to be Made.

Washington, Sept. 8.—Marked indications of a compromise in the senate controversy over reservations to the league of nations covenant came today from both democratic and republican sources after Republican Leader Lodge had announced that the peace treaty would be reported to the senate Wed-

nesday and probably taken up for consideration next Monday.

Probably the most important development of the day was a statement to the senate by Senator Simmons, of North Carolina, prominent in administration leadership, declaring "some concessions in the way of reservations will have to be made to secure its ratification." Although "utterly" opposing some of the Lodge reservations, Senator Simmons said he was suggesting a compromise on "conservative reservations of an inter-

pretative character."

Republican senators continued efforts to compose differences over a reservation to Article 10 of the league covenant. Senators McCumber, North Dakota, Kellogg, Minnesota, and Lenroot, of Wisconsin, were said to have drafted substitute reservations which were discussed privately today in lengthy cloakroom conferences.

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